

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Bureau of Unemployment Compensation

**EXPLANATION OF WORK SEARCH AND SUITABLE WORK REQUIREMENTS
under the
TRADE READJUSTMENT ALLOWANCE (TRA) PROGRAM**

The Laws pertaining to a claimant's obligations regarding Work Search and Suitable Work requirements are different under the Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) Program than they were under the Regular Unemployment Insurance (UI) Program. **AS A TRA BENEFIT CLAIMANT, YOU MUST OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING WORK SEARCH REQUIREMENTS TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR ALLOWANCES.**

WORK SEARCH:

You must make a sustained and systematic effort to seek work every week. As a TRA claimant, you are expected to make a more diligent and active search for work than would normally be required of you when receiving regular benefits. You are expected to contact three employers in two or more days.

If there are no or few openings in your customary occupation, you must broaden the types of work you are looking for to meet the active search for work requirements. If you restrict your job search to your customary occupation as a mere preference, not based on physical or mental capability, you will not meet the requirements of seeking work and may not be eligible to receive TRA allowances.

In most cases, merely contacting your former employer or your union business agent will only partially meet your work search requirement and will not in itself be adequate to meet work search requirements. You must make an additional effort. A promised offer of work does not relieve you from continuing to actively seek work. You can only be exempt from this requirement if you are in a State approved training program.

TANGIBLE EVIDENCE:

You must provide "Tangible Evidence" of a sustained and systematic effort to seek work each week. You must provide a written record of:

1. Employers Contacted (Company Name and Address) – **Three employer contacts in two or more days.**
2. Name of Person You Spoke With at the Worksite
3. Date of Contact
4. Type of Work Sought
5. Result of Contact

A work search log will be provided for recording this information for each week claimed.

FAILURE TO APPLY FOR OR TO ACCEPT SUITABLE WORK:

Suitable work under the TRA Program means **any work that is substantially equal or higher skill level** than your past adversely affected employment under the Trade Act. Your prior experience and training and your prior earnings will only be considered as specified under TRA Law. We will continue to consider the distance of available work, as well as the availability of such work due to labor disputes, strikes, or lockouts.

For work to be deemed suitable, the gross wages offered must not be less than the State or Federal minimum wage; and cannot be less than 80% of the individual's average weekly wage in your past adversely affected employment under the Trade Act.

You will be ineligible to receive benefits under the TRA Program if you fail to accept a referral or fail to apply for referred work by the CareerCenter, or fail to accept work that is offered in writing. However, the Law for regular benefits may apply if the offer of work is not in writing. You must report **ANY AND ALL** offers of work.

Suitable work requirements for TRA benefits apply if your prospects for employment are determined to be "NOT GOOD." Your job prospects will be accepted as "GOOD" only if you have a definite offer to work to begin within 4 weeks. This determination will be made when you file your first claim and complete your claimant questionnaire. Return the questionnaire to the Special Program Unit (SPU) in Augusta. The SPU mailing address is:

Maine Department of Labor
Bureau of Unemployment Compensation
ATTN: Special Program Unit
47P State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0047

Telephone No. (207) 621-5103
Fax No. (207) 287-3395
TTY (Deaf/Hard of Hearing)..... 1-800-794-1110

If your prospects are determined to be "NOT GOOD" you will be referred to the CareerCenter. An Employment Specialist or Counselor may call you in for work registration or job referral.

Remember, even though your prospects for employment are considered as "GOOD," you are still required to make a sustained and systematic effort to seek work each week.

PENALTIES:

If you fail to meet the requirements for seeking work or fail to accept or apply for suitable work as defined above, you will be disqualified for benefits for the week you fail to meet such requirements and you will be denied TRA benefits until you work at least four weeks and earn not less than four times your TRA Weekly Benefit Amount.

As there is no "good cause" for failing to actively search for work during a week, you **SHOULD NOT FILE A CLAIM** for a week in which you did not make a work search.

Thank you for attention to this important notice.

If you have any questions about the requirements set out in this notification, you may call
(207) 621-5103 for assistance.